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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S. Elections, Russia, EU

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¶1. Lead Stories Summary

All German media led with lengthy reports on the results of the U.S. elections and carried images of President-elect Obama and his family. Mass tabloid Bild headlined: "Germany congratulates the new U.S. President: Yes, we can--be friends." Berliner Zeitung's headline said: "The world celebrates Obama." FT Deutschland: "Obama Promises A New America." Editorials focused on the U.S. elections and Russia's announcement to deploy missiles near the Polish border.

¶2. (U.S.) Outcome of U.S. Elections

ARD-TV's Tagesthemen commented: "With spontaneous rallies, the nation wanted to collectively get rid of a nightmare. A nightmare America plunged itself into by electing the terrible George W. Bush eight years ago... The rapture of last night might soon be followed by a painful headache if the people realize how little a 'messiah' like Obama can achieve and meet their expectations.... Apart from the admiration for the democratic achievements of the American people, there is also skepticism. The excitement over Obama's charisma and visionary power could soon turn into disappointment and frustration."

ARD-TV Tagesschau opined: "Last night the United States showed the world that it is capable of reinventing itself: America elected an African-American President. Race barriers have fallen down.... America is right to be proud of itself. But things will be tough once the tears of joy are dry and the songs of praise died out. There has never been a President of the most powerful nation in the world who faced such a legacy before. The challenges are enormous.... Americans and the whole world are now curious to hear details about how Obama wants to bring change about."

ZDF-TV's Heute remarked: "Many Americans and people around the world view November 4, 2008 as a day of liberation... especially because Obama promises a serious morale change to his fellow countrymen and not just them.... He raises hope for an end of political lies and

social constraint. The underdog becomes the yardstick and the hope. He led Americans to themselves and freed them from their alienation with their own country. His notion of listening instead of hitting is disarming. His language and style return young people to the ballots and maybe also into the community."

Deutschlandfunk radio noted: "In a time in which utopias have disappeared and capitalism must be repaired, we are searching for a deeper understanding. Obama called on the power of ideas - not a specific god or ideology but on the idea that the unthinkable can be possible. This kind of inspiration excited young people for politics again."

Frankfurter Allgemeine editorialized: "Concerning the world, America's partners and allies have it in their hands whether Obama will be successful. He will reach out and listen to them and their matters and priorities. He will also let them know about his priorities. We will then see whether, apart from the will for a new beginning, there can be a solid program for a global community."

Under the headline "America's Liberation," Süddeutsche commented: "America wants a new beginning. Strained by two wars and a financial crisis, the country is longing for liberty. The majority of voters cast their ballots in an attempt to resist the decline, the loss of significance and political mismanagement.... The many faces wet with tears suggest that great tension vented during the election night. The first African-American president - what a

symbol for a society that that claims to lead the world in terms of dynamics and open-mindedness. What a sign for minorities and those who are hopeful - who if you take them together will soon be a majority in the United States."

Die Welt has this to say: "The fact the Obama was elected President could help those who have been persistently ignoring America's inner strength and attractiveness to open their eyes. Anti-Americanism will have to change with Obama as President."

Bild comments: "The new transatlantic embrace is an historic opportunity. Thanks to the Americans, we rose to prosperity again after the war, Americans defended Berlin during the air lift, created peace in Kosovo, defended our security against terrorists and many more things. And also economically, we depend more on the United States as the other way around. Therefore it is important that the excitement goes on also after the election night."

### 13. (Russia) Medvedev Address

Deutschlandfunk commented: "It is no coincidence that Russia announced the deployment of missiles on this day. Right at the beginning of the Obama era, 'a pile' is driven into the ground. But we cannot accept that Russia is describing this step as an answer to the deployment of NATO defense systems. Short-range missiles are first of all political weapons. In this respect, Moscow pursues the same policy it began with its crusade in Georgia. Now Moscow has also demonstrated that it uses military means to implement its foreign policy goals. Now NATO's strategic concept must really be rethought, and Obama's foreign policy quickly faces its first test, not in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in relations with Russia."

Handelsblatt opined: " Medvedev has struck the wrong tone and thus acted like a bull in a china shop, for the next U.S. president is by no means such a fervent admirer of a U.S. missile defense shield at the Russian front door. Obama has taken a pragmatic approach to the project. It will be set up only if it is financially feasible. In view of the immense burdens of the U.S. budget, this project seems increasingly unlikely. It would have been wiser if Medvedev had taken a clear analysis of Obama's position, for Obama pins his hopes on dialogue. Now the two are likely to meet in an icy atmosphere some day in the future. But letters 'From Moscow With Love' have always had a special tone."

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung wondered: "Was it a coincidence that the Russian president delivered his first speech on the state of the country explicitly on the day when the whole world openly acknowledged and took note with enthusiasm whom the American people entrusted the leadership of the country during difficult times? This is hardly the case. Not even one day after his greatest

triumph, Obama is not being spared [from criticism]. On the contrary, according to the leadership in Moscow, the obligation to improve U.S.-Russian relations is only up to Obama. Indeed, Washington and Moscow have much to talk about, but Medvedev's welcome address for Obama did not sound like the invitation for talks but rather like a provocation."

Sueddeutsche Zeitung asked: "Was that really necessary? Especially on the day of Barak Obama's greatest triumph, Russian President Medvedev morosely attacked the United States. But it is easy to decipher Medvedev's message to Washington: The new Russian president wants to talk to the new U.S. president at eye level. The missile deployment in Kaliningrad should first of all appease the national soul, but will not block the path for talks later. For the time being, Medvedev has now gotten a greater scope of action, and that is why it will not last long before U.S.-Russian relations will relax a bit again."

In the view of Tagesspiegel, "It has certainly to do with the U.S. election that Russian President Medvedev started to hit back only yesterday. It is a clear signal to President-elect Obama not to repeat the mistakes of his predecessor, underestimate Moscow, and to insist that economic and political decisions of global significance are made solely by and in Washington. That is why the freshly elected U.S. president would be well-advised to deal with the new realities in a constructive way and not to pursue a confrontational course."

According to Die Welt, "the [Russian] imperial reflexes have again coming to the fore and have demonstrated a surprising inertia. Russia considers itself primarily threatened by dwindling spheres of influence to which it believes it is entitled. Medvedev confronted his counter part [in the U.S.] especially on the day of his election triumph with this claim and presented him a long list with the sins of his predecessor. If this was considered a new start in relations with the United States, then only one term is coming to the fore: false start."

Frankfurter Rundschau observed: "A state leader who is willing to make compromises, someone who is seeking a new beginning in Russian-U.S. relations after Barak Obama's triumphant election victory would and sound different from the gruff leader in the Kremlin who sent out a threat to deploy missiles instead of sending congratulations to Washington." Regional daily Nordwest Zeitung of Oldenburg judged: "Russian President Medvedev and his government leader Putin are again turning the spiral of distrust. The old thinking in blocks is again coming to the fore." Volksstimme of Magdeburg observed: "

#### 14. (EU) Accession Report

According to Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, "it is certainly a bit rash to promise Croatia an end to the accession talks at the end of 2009, because this is a country where the mafia kills unpleasant journalists. Other accession candidates, especially Turkey, have not had a promising year either. That is why the EU member states should admit that at issue is not the question of whether the - overestimated - Lisbon Treaty has entered into force or not. No candidate is mature enough to accede to the EU. The premature acceptance of Bulgaria and Romania has already created enough damage. This should not happen again."

Berliner Zeitung dealt with the EU's credibility and noted: "There is no reason to freeze the EU's enlargement. At issue is the EU's credibility. The prospect for a future membership is a stabilizing factor in many accession countries. In other countries it makes reforms possible that would otherwise be unthinkable. Croatia in particular can demonstrate to the EU that it is really serious about its neighbors. If the country meets all requirements, it should accede. This would be an important political signal. And it is very likely that the EU would also be able to cope with it."